

Chapter 1 A Trail Vision for Indiana

The Indiana Trails Vision

To build a statewide trail, greenway and bikeway system that provides access to a trail opportunity within 15 minutes of all Indiana citizens.



The Indiana State Trails Plan Goal and Objectives

The Indiana State Trails Plan goal and objectives propose to fulfill Indiana's trails vision through:

Partnering federal, state and local governments with trail use groups and organizations, businesses, community groups and concerned citizens to connect communities through a state wide multi-model network of greenways and trail system.

Encouraging the public and private sectors to develop combined trail and infrastructure opportunities that will support the development of Indiana communities with utility and recreational needs for the 21st century.

Educating the public and private sectors about the benefits a statewide greenways and bikeway system will bring in terms of health, fitness, tourism, infrastructure and economic advantages to their communities.

Highlighting links to neighboring state, local and regional trails systems and places of interest.

Endorsing the use of greenways and bikeways as an economic growth asset to the State of Indiana, its communities and its citizens.

Indiana Trails Goal, Objectives, Strategies and Actions

Based on the information presented in the remainder of this document, the following goal, objectives and actions have been set for providing trails in Indiana. It is important to note that this plan provides opportunities at the state government, local government and the grass roots level to participate in reaching the goal. Providing for the need of trails users in Indiana will require partnerships and teamwork among all three levels. The goal is ambitious. By working together, it can be accomplished.

Indiana Trails Goal:

A trail within 15 minutes of every Hoosier by 2016.

The Indiana trails goal will be measured in terms of a trail within 7.5 miles of every Hoosier.

Objective #1:

Partner Federal, State, Local and private resources to build a statewide network of trails

Objective #2:

Support non-state entities that acquire, develop and manage trails

These objectives can be met through implementing the following strategies. Federal, state, local and not-governmental agencies working together can utilize these strategies to address trails related issues pertinent to their situation. Taking coordinated action at multiple levels will create a statewide environment where the statewide trails network can grow and become an integral part of the lives of Indiana's citizens and of the state's economy as a whole.



Strategy #1:

Improve coordination of trail development, planning and design at local, state and federal levels

Strategy # 2:

Increase trail funding to provide trails to meet present and future demand.

Action 1:

Encourage interested and impacted representatives including landowners, not-for-profits, businesses, public transit, and governmental entities to get involved in all phases of developing new trails

Action 1:

Initiate and increase state funding mechanisms to augment annual operating budgets and capital expenditures for acquiring and developing trails

Action 2:

Secure the participation of representatives in the health and wellness profession, and related businesses such as insurance and pharmaceutical industries

Action 2:

Encourage local initiatives for trail funding

Action 3:

Ensure that trails are included in road right-of-ways, road abandonment and bridge development and expansion projects

Action 3:

Encourage and provide incentives for private funding for trails from such entities as foundations and corporations

Action 4:

Include engineers, architects and planners during all phases of trail development to ensure natural resource preservation and ADA compliance

Action 4:

Include funding for long-term trail maintenance in operational budgets

Action 5:

Encourage and support not-for-profits to acquire and develop trails

Action 5:

Foster a working statewide support network composed of agencies, legislators, planners/designers, organizations, managers and citizens interested in trail development

Action 6:

Encourage and support public and private partnerships that acquire and develop trails



Strategy #3:

Acquire more land for trails

Strategy #4:

Collect and distribute information on trails

Action 1:

Identify and extend opportunities for intra- and inter-state trail connections

Action 2:

Increase the number of miles of trails in Indiana

Action 3:

Improve the acquisition process of former railroad corridors for trail development

Action 4:

Advocate that trails be included in land use planning, including re-negotiation of road right-of-ways and bridge developments

Action 5:

Advocate that developers be required to set aside land for trails

Action 6:

Expand the number of areas available for the legal use of ATV's, motorcycles, off-road bicycles and off-highway vehicles

**Action 1:**

Encourage and support research on Indiana trails and trail related issues

Action 2:

Inform the public about the health, economic and social benefits of trail use

Action 3:

Develop and distribute educational materials about trail use and environmental ethics/etiquette

Action 4:

Distribute information on trails via the internet and other media

Action 5:

Install signs that interpret natural, historical and cultural features of trails

Action 6:

Install multilingual signs where appropriate

Action 7:

Encourage the use of standardized signs and symbols to designate trail activities and facilitate trail navigation

Action 8:

Include health education information on trail maps and guides

A State Visionary Trails Network

A statewide trails vision map was created based on extensive inventory, analysis, coordination with local governments and regional planning entities and public input. This map intends to highlight corridors that could serve as a statewide trail backbone network that can connect to concurrent and subsequent trails planning efforts. The map delineates corridors of national, state or regional importance that connect communities to each other and natural and cultural resources. The actual placement of trails within these corridors, and the inclusion of other corridors in the statewide trails system will be determined as specific trail projects are proposed and completed based on more detailed planning efforts.

Criteria Used to Establish Proposed Visionary Trails System

The following criteria were used to identify trails to be included on the list of trails of statewide significance. Trails of statewide significance are those trails that offer the highest potential to accommodate multiple connections to destinations and communities. Not all trails in Indiana were considered. Trails that are loop trails or those located solely on a single property such as those found only on state parks or forests were not considered. The designated use of a trail was not a consideration.

In order for a trail to be placed on the list it must have satisfied both of the following criteria.

1. Proposed trail corridor crosses two or more counties – all
2. Proposed corridor contains trail segments completed, under development or formally planned – many others

The following lists of trails describe how each trail included in the list of statewide significant trails was classified in terms of each individual trail's planning and or development stages.

Formally designated or being developed as trail corridor

- American Discovery Trail
- Monon Trail in Marion and Hamilton Counties
- Cardinal Greenway from Richmond to Marion
- Nickel Plate Trail in Howard, Miami and Fulton Counties
- Knobstone Trail in Clark, Scott and Washington Counties

Focus of study or plan for trail corridor

- National Road Heritage Trail from Terre Haute to Richmond
- Marquette Greenway in northern Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties
- I69 corridor from Indianapolis to Evansville

Formal organization devoted to development of trail corridor

- B&O Trail in Marion, Hendricks, Putnam and Parke Counties
- Knobstone Trail extension to Morgan County
- Panhandle Pathway from Winamac to Logansport

Considerable level of discussion as proposed trail corridor


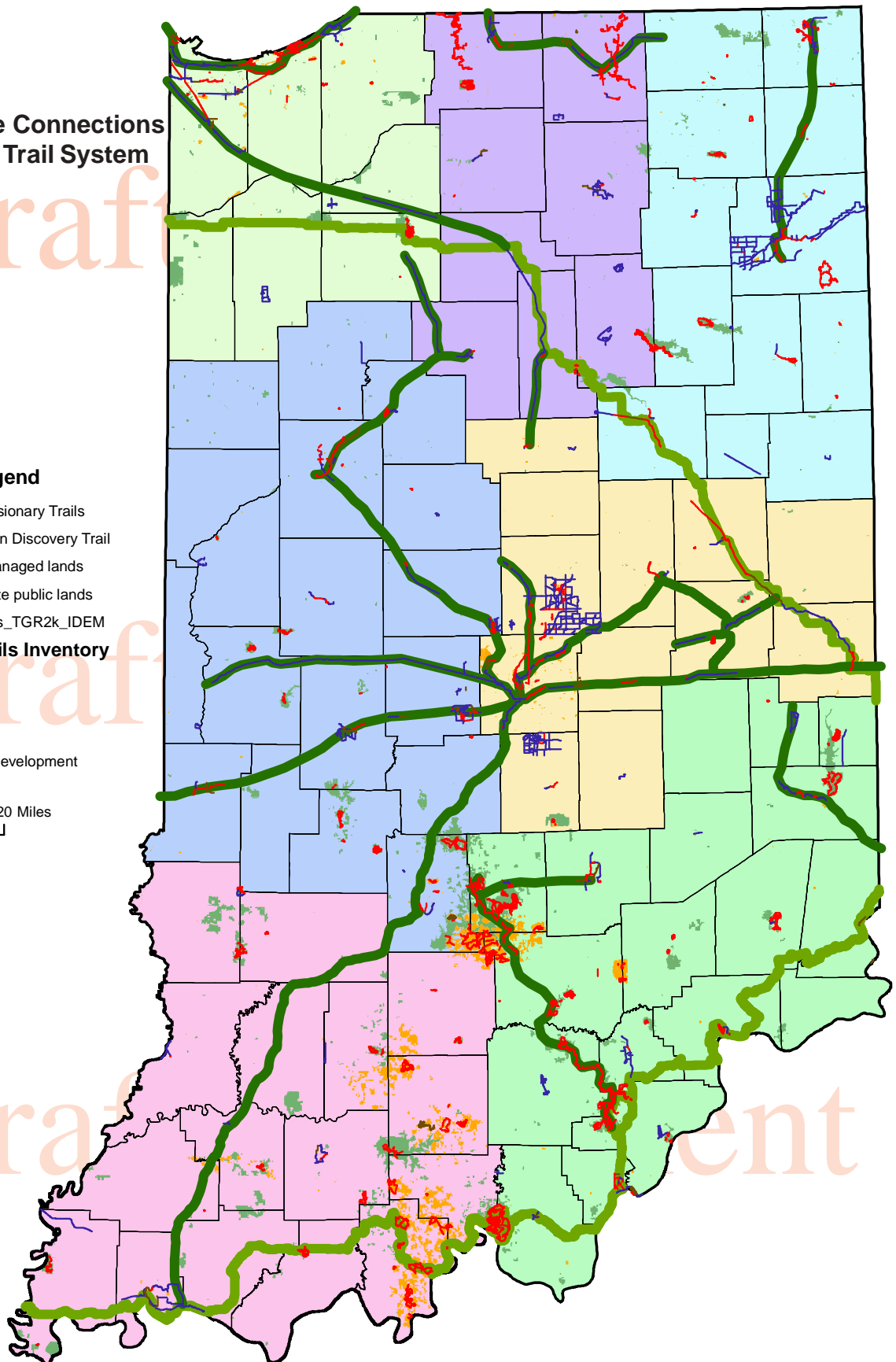
- Farm Heritage Trail in Boone and Tippecanoe Counties
- Old Interurban Trail from Ft. Benjamin Harrison to Anderson
- Whitewater Canal Trail in Fayette and Franklin Counties
- SR46 Trail in Bartholomew and Brown Counties
- Wabash Heritage Trail from Lafayette to Logansport
- Pumpkinvine/St. Joseph River Corridor in St. Joseph, Elkhart and LaGrange Counties
- Ft. Wayne to Angola Corridor in Allen, DeKalb and Steuben Counties

Making the Connections Indiana's Trail System

Draft

- Legend**
- State Visionary Trails
 - American Discovery Trail
 - DNR managed lands
 - Non-state public lands
 - Counties_TGR2k_IDEM
- Indiana Trails Inventory**
- Trail Status**
- Open
 - Planned
 - Under Development

0 5 10 20 Miles

A preliminary vision of the Indiana State Trails System (May, 2006)

Measuring Progress on Indiana's Trail System

Current Status

Legend

— Trails Open and Under Development

■ Buffer of Trails Open and Under Development

Census Block Groups

People/SqMeter

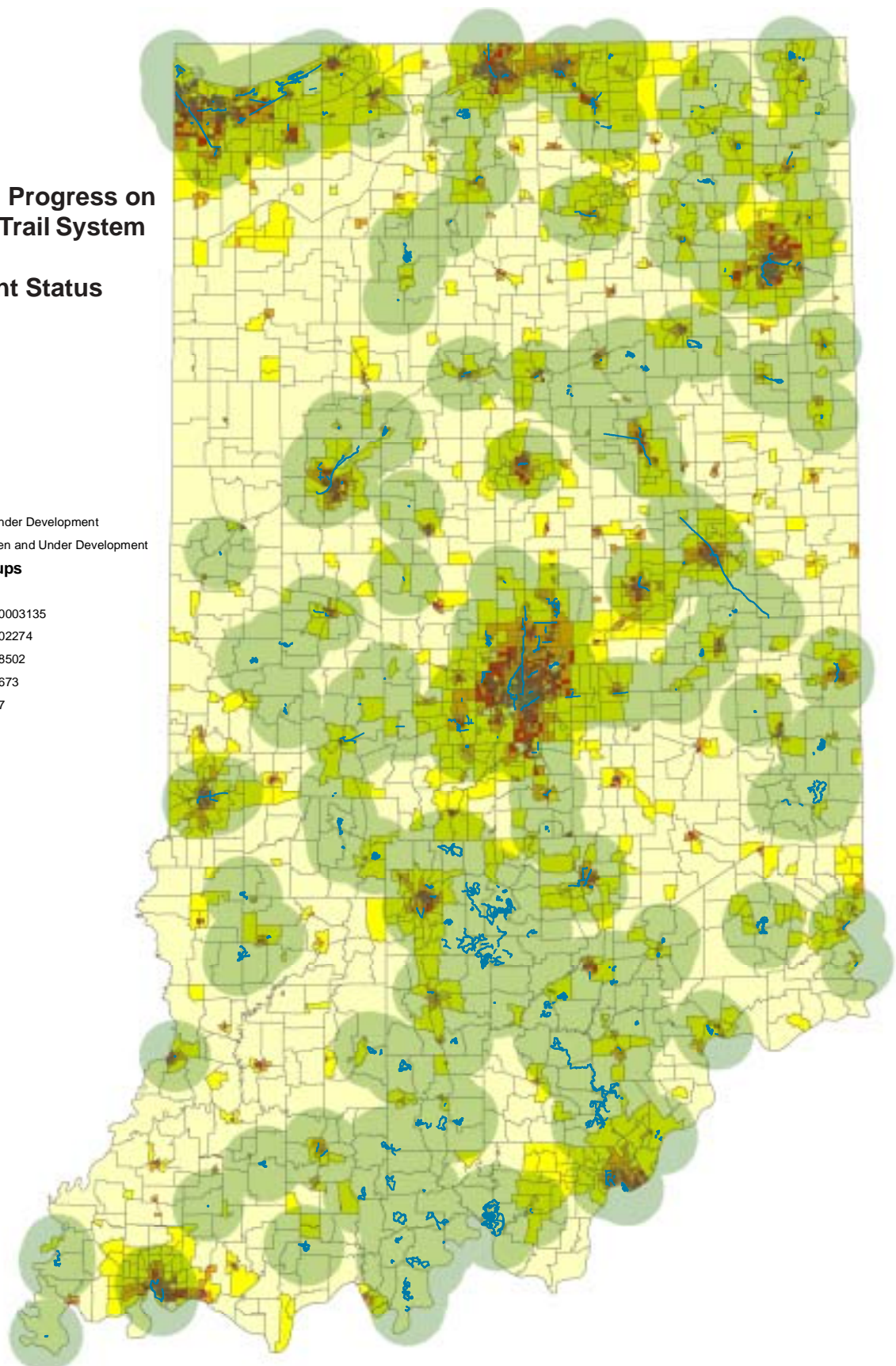
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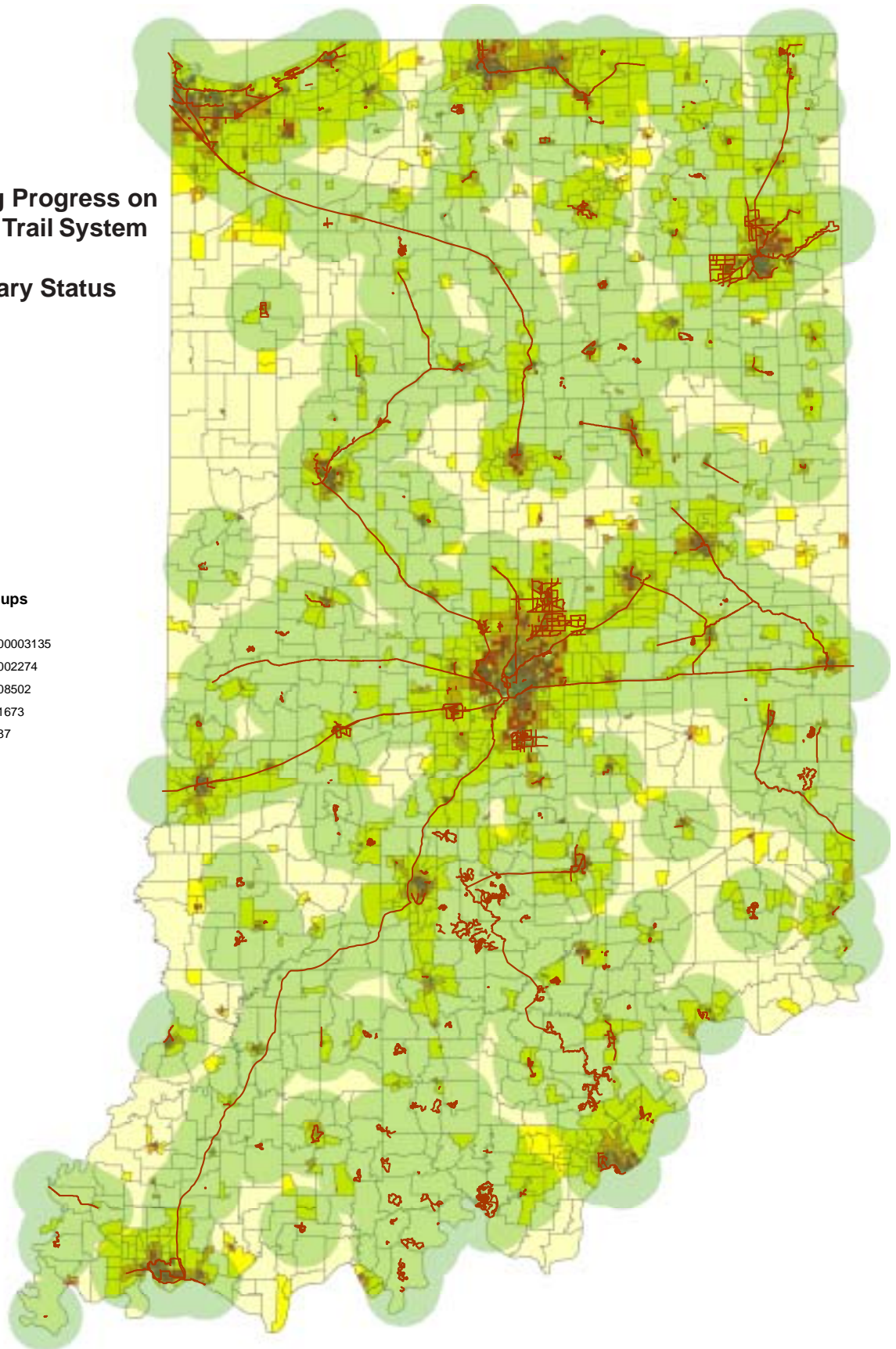
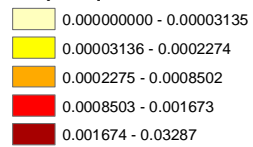
Population within 7.5 miles of a trail currently developed

Measuring Progress on Indiana's Trail System

Visionary Status

Legend

Census Block Groups People/SqMeter

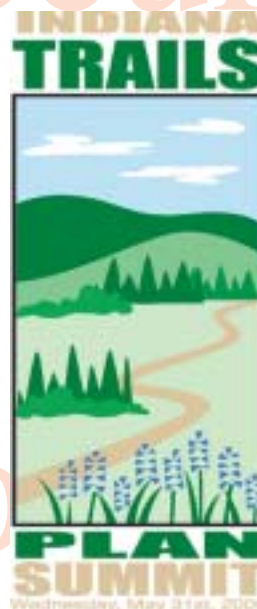


Population within 7.5 miles of a trail developed, planned and visionary

Developing the Plan

The Indiana trails plan was developed by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Outdoor Recreation. A Trails Plan Steering Committee was convened to provide input and guidance as the plan was being developed. The steering committee consisted of DNR Staff and members of various agencies and associations involved in trails and trails related issues throughout Indiana. The Steering committee met periodically to review the document, maps and issues, and to plan for involving the public during the process. The following groups were represented on the steering committee.

- Governor's Office
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Indiana Department of Transportation
- Indiana Economic Development Corporation
- Governor's Council for Physical Fitness & Sports
- Indiana Office of Tourism
- The Federal Highway Administration
- National Park Service – Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
- Indiana Park & Recreation Association
- Bloomington Area Transportation System
- Indiana Trails Advisory Board
- Hoosier Rails to Trails Council
- Indiana Greenways Foundation
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Northwest Indiana Regional Plan Commission
- Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission
- Indiana Bicycle Coalition
- IU SPEA/Indiana Planning Association
- Indiana Association of Cities & Towns
- Association of Indiana Counties
- Indiana Farm Bureau
- Pigeon Creek Greenways Passage
- Ohio River Greenway Commission
- National Road Heritage Trail
- Cardinal Greenways
- Whitewater Canal Trail
- B&O Trail Association
- City of Ft. Wayne
- Indiana Chamber of Commerce
- Indiana Trail Riders Association/Indiana Horse Council
- The Nature Conservancy - Indiana Chapter
- Indiana Chapter - International Right of Way Association
- Indiana Rural Development Council/Office of Rural Affairs



The Plan Steering Committee assisted the Governor's Office and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources in hosting a Trails Plan Summit in May of 2006. Networking, information exchange and public input were the focal point of the summit. Attendees from around Indiana took part in completing the visionary trails map utilizing the real time mapping. The attendees also participated in charrette style discussions of trails issues that are prevalent through out the state. In small groups, they discussed the issues and brainstormed recommendations and solutions that were included in the plan where applicable. At the end of the day, the attendees presented their finding to the governor.

How the public was involved
(To be completed post May 31st.)

Trails conference
Comment period
Trails Plan open houses

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